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Security Council

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Letter dated 31 December 2012 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith the report of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea (see annex), which contains an account of the Committee's activities during the period from 1 January to 31 December 2012. The report is submitted in accordance with the note by the President of the Security Council of 29 March 1995 (S/1995/234).

(*Signed*) H. S. **Puri**
Chair
Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992)
and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea

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Annex

Report of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea

I. Introduction

1. The present report of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea covers the period from 1 January to 31 December 2012.

2. For 2012, the Bureau of the Committee consisted of H. S. Puri (India) as Chair, with the delegations of Pakistan and Togo providing the Vice-Chairs.

II. Background

3. By its resolution 733 (1992), the Security Council imposed a general and complete arms embargo on Somalia, and by its resolution 751 (1992), the Council established a Committee to oversee the implementation of the embargo. Subsequently, in its resolutions 1356 (2001), 1425 (2002), 1744 (2007), 1772 (2007), 1846 (2008), 1851 (2008), 1916 (2010) and 2060 (2012), the Council outlined certain exemptions to the embargo and further elaborated the scope of the measures.

4. By its resolution 1844 (2008), the Security Council decided that all Member States should take the necessary measures to prevent the entry into or transit through their territories of individuals designated by the Committee. The Council also decided that all Member States should freeze without delay the funds, other financial assets and economic resources owned or controlled, directly or indirectly, by the individuals or entities designated by the Committee. The Council imposed a targeted arms embargo against Somalia, including measures to prevent the supply of related training and financial and other assistance to designated individuals and entities.

5. By paragraph 8 of the same resolution, the Council mandated the Committee to designate individuals and entities: (a) engaging in or providing support for acts that threaten the peace, security or stability of Somalia; (b) having acted in violation of the general and complete arms embargo; and (c) obstructing the delivery of humanitarian assistance to Somalia, or access to, or distribution of, humanitarian assistance in Somalia. By its resolution 2002 (2011), the Council added to these criteria: (d) being political or military leaders recruiting or using children in armed conflicts in Somalia; and (e) being responsible for violations of international law involving the targeting of civilians, including children and women, in situations of armed conflict. The Committee was entrusted with, inter alia, the tasks of monitoring the implementation of the travel ban and assets freeze, with the support of the Monitoring Group; seeking from all Member States, in particular those in the region, information regarding the actions taken by them to implement effectively the travel ban and assets freeze; and reporting to the Council at least every 120 days on its work and on the implementation of resolution 1844 (2008).

6. On 12 April 2010, the Committee designated eight individuals and one entity to be subject to the travel ban, assets freeze and targeted arms embargo imposed under resolution 1844 (2008). On 28 July 2011, the Committee added two individuals to the list. On 17 February, 25 July and 23 August 2012, the Committee added the name of one individual to the list.[1]

7. On 19 March 2010, the Security Council adopted resolution 1916 (2010), by which it decided that, for a period of 12 months, the assets freeze that it had imposed by paragraph 3 of resolution 1844 (2008) should not apply to the payment of funds, other financial assets or economic resources necessary to ensure the timely delivery of urgently needed humanitarian assistance in Somalia. By resolution 1972 (2011), adopted on 17 March 2011, the Council renewed that exemption for 16 months. By resolution 1916 (2010), the Council requested the United Nations Humanitarian Aid Coordinator for Somalia to report to it every 120 days on any impediments to the delivery of humanitarian assistance in Somalia. By resolution 1972 (2011), the Council requested the Emergency Relief Coordinator to report to it on the same issue by 15 November 2011 and 15 July 2012. By its resolution 2060 (2012), the Council extended the exemption until 25 July 2013 and requested the Emergency Relief Coordinator to report to it by 20 November 2012 and 20 July 2013.

8. By resolution 2036 (2012), the Council imposed a ban on the direct or indirect import of charcoal from Somalia, whether or not such charcoal originated in Somalia, and called upon the Somali authorities to take the necessary measures to prevent the export of charcoal from Somalia.

9. By its resolution 2060 (2012), the Council extended until 25 August 2012 the mandate of the Monitoring Group referred to in paragraph 3 of resolution 1558 (2004). The Group consists of eight experts, who were appointed by the Secretary-General on 13 August 2012 (S/2012/631). By the same resolution, the Council introduced an exemption to the arms embargo for the United Nations Political Office for Somalia.

10. On 23 December 2009, the Security Council adopted resolution 1907 (2009), by which it imposed a ban on the sale or supply to and from Eritrea of arms and related materiel, technical assistance and training. By the same resolution, the Council imposed an assets freeze, a travel ban and a targeted arms embargo on individuals and entities, including but not limited to the Eritrean political and military leadership, designated by the Committee as (a) violating the arms embargo; (b) providing support from Eritrea to armed opposition groups that aim to destabilize the region; (c) obstructing the implementation of resolution 1862 (2009) concerning Djibouti; (d) harbouring, financing, facilitating, supporting, organizing, training or inciting individuals or groups to perpetrate acts of violence or terrorist acts against other States or their citizens in the region; or (e) obstructing the investigations or work of the Monitoring Group. The Council further expanded the mandate of the Monitoring Group to monitor and report on the implementation of the measures imposed by resolution 1907 (2009).

[1] The list of individuals and entities subject to the measures imposed by paragraphs 1, 3 and 7 of Security Council resolution 1844 (2008) is available from http://www.un.org/sc/committees/751/pdf/1844_cons_list.pdf.

11. Since the Security Council, by its resolution 1907 (2009), had expanded the mandate of the Committee, the Committee decided on 26 February 2010 to change its name to "Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea".

12. On 5 December 2011, the Security Council adopted resolution 2023 (2011), by which it expanded the restrictive measures concerning Eritrea in the areas of "Diaspora taxes", the Eritrean mining sector and financial services, and expanded the mandate of the Monitoring Group to monitor the implementation of those measures and demanded that Eritrea make available information pertaining to Djiboutian combatants missing in action.

III. Summary of the Committee's activities

13. During 2012, the Committee met 10 times in informal consultations, on 3 February, 18 April, 14 May, 6 July, 11 July, 17 July, 31 July, 3 October, 13 November and 14 December 2012. Furthermore, the Committee conducted a good amount of its work through written procedures.

14. On 3 February 2012, the Committee received the midterm briefing from the Coordinator of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea, pursuant to paragraph 6 (l) of resolution 2002 (2011). During the Committee's informal consultations on 18 April, it had an exchange of views with the Permanent Representative of Eritrea to the United Nations in connection with the work of the Monitoring Group. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia briefed the Committee on 14 May.

15. During the informal consultations held on 6 July, the Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator briefed the Committee on the report of the United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator (S/2012/546), submitted pursuant to paragraph 5 of Security Council resolution 1972 (2011). During the informal consultations on 11 July, the Coordinator of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea presented its final reports on Somalia (S/2012/544) and Eritrea (S/2012/545), submitted pursuant to paragraph 6 (m) of resolution 2002 (2011). In that connection, the Committee met with delegations of Eritrea and Somalia on 17 July and 31 July, respectively.

16. During the informal consultations held on 3 October 2012, the Coordinator of the Monitoring Group briefed the Committee on the programme of work of the Group and provided follow-up information on issues carried over from the previous mandate. A representative of the Office of Legal Affairs also briefed the Committee on legal issues arising from the interaction of the Group with the media. During the informal consultations held on 13 November, the Committee was briefed by a representative of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs on the report of the United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator (S/2012/856), submitted pursuant to paragraph 8 of Security Council resolution 2060 (2012). Representatives of the World Food Programme and the United Nations Children's Fund were also present to respond to questions from Committee members. On 14 December, the Coordinator of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea briefed the members of the Committee via video link about developments regarding the charcoal ban imposed by resolution 2036 (2012).

17. On 17 December 2012, the Committee approved procedures for cooperation with the International Criminal Police Organization.

18. On 28 March, 24 July and 8 November 2012, the Chair of the Committee briefed the Security Council during consultations on the activities of the Committee during the previous 120 days, pursuant to paragraph 11 (g) of resolution 1844 (2008).

19. During the reporting period, the Committee approved 18 requests for exemptions to the arms embargo for non-lethal military equipment pursuant to paragraph 3 of resolution 1356 (2001) and 19 requests for exemptions to the arms embargo pursuant to paragraph 11 (b) of resolution 1772 (2007).

20. In 2012, the Committee received 1 report (see appendix I) from Member States regarding the implementation of the measures imposed by resolution 1844 (2008), 2 reports (see appendix II) regarding the implementation of the measures imposed by resolution 2002 (2011), 19 reports (see appendix III) regarding the implementation of the measures imposed by resolution 2023 (2011) and 14 reports (see appendix IV) regarding the implementation of the measures imposed by resolution 2036 (2012).

Appendix I

Reports regarding the implementation of the measures imposed by Security Council resolution 1844 (2008)

Member State	*Date*
Luxembourg	21 May 2012

Appendix II

Reports regarding the implementation of the measures imposed by Security Council resolution 2002 (2011)

Member State	*Date*
Argentina	20 March 2012
Portugal	2 August 2012

Appendix III

Reports regarding the implementation of the measures imposed by Security Council resolution 2023 (2011)

Member State	*Date*
Slovakia	5 April 2012
Canada	24 April 2012
Mexico	17 May 2012
Slovakia	30 May 2012
Japan	1 June 2012
France	7 June 2012
United Arab Emirates	19 June 2012
South Africa	26 June 2012
Russian Federation	9 July 2012
Australia	20 July 2012
Germany	24 July 2012
Latvia	27 July 2012
Sweden	9 August 2012
Argentina	7 August 2012
Lebanon	13 September 2012
Andorra	22 October 2012
Qatar	1 November 2012 and 10 December 2012
Australia	19 November 2012
United Arab Emirates	6 December 2012

Appendix IV

Reports regarding the implementation of the measures imposed by Security Council resolution 2036 (2012)

Member State	*Date*
Russian Federation	16 April 2012
Canada	18 June 2012
United Arab Emirates	19 June 2012
Japan	21 June 2012
Brazil	21 June 2012
South Africa	26 June 2012
Russian Federation	9 July 2012
United States of America	24 July 2012
Latvia	27 July 2012
Germany	1 August 2012
Portugal	2 August 2012
Argentina	7 August 2012
Qatar	1 November 2012
United Arab Emirates	6 December 2012

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Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the United Nations Office for West Africa

I. Introduction

1. In a letter dated 20 December 2010 (S/2010/661), the President of the Security Council informed me that the members of the Council had agreed to extend the mandate of the United Nations Office for West Africa (UNOWA) until 31 December 2013 and requested me to report on the implementation of the revised mandate of UNOWA every six months.

2. The present report covers the period from 1 July to 31 December 2012. It provides an overview of national, cross-cutting and cross-border developments in West Africa and outlines the activities undertaken by UNOWA in the areas of preventive diplomacy, early warning and capacity-building to address emerging threats and challenges to regional peace and stability. It also outlines the Office's efforts to enhance synergies with, inter alia, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Mano River Union and the African Union, in the promotion of peace and stability in the subregion.

II. Developments and trends in West Africa

A. Political trends

3. Since the issuance of my previous report, of 29 June 2012 (S/2012/510), the political landscape in West Africa has continued to be dominated by the crises in Mali and the Sahel, as well as by the post-coup developments in Guinea-Bissau. The crisis in Mali has continued to have an impact on the political and security landscape, including on the humanitarian community operating in the region. Mali's neighbours, particularly Mauritania and Niger, remain at risk given their porous borders with the northern part of the country. These risks were exemplified by the kidnapping of six non-governmental organization staff in Niger in October and of a French citizen, on 21 November, near Mali's border with Mauritania and Senegal. In Niger, the outbreak of the Malian crisis has had a significant impact on the already fragile economic and security situation in the country. Meanwhile, the leaders of the subregion have played a central role in mobilizing the international community to address the growing insecurity in the subregion.

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4. General elections held on 17 November in Sierra Leone were conducted in a peaceful environment and recognized as credible, free and fair by international and national observers. The incumbent President, Ernest Bai Koroma, was declared the winner with 58.7 per cent of the votes. However, the main opposition party, the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP), alleged that there had been massive and systematic electoral malpractices and, on 30 November, filed a complaint in the Supreme Court challenging the election of President Koroma. On 3 December, as a sign of reconciliation and mutual desire for political dialogue, President Koroma and the SLPP leadership issued a joint statement in which the two sides agreed to work together in the interest of peace and stability in the country. Meanwhile, on 2 December, legislative and municipal elections were held in Burkina Faso, in a free, peaceful and transparent environment.

5. The smooth transfer of power that occurred in Ghana with the election of Vice-President John Dramani Mahama as President following the death of President John Atta Mills on 24 July, demonstrated the political maturity of Ghanaian democratic institutions. This enabled the country to conclude the electoral process leading to free, peaceful and transparent legislative and presidential elections on 7 December. The election results, as announced by the electoral commission on 9 December, declared incumbent President Mahama the winner with 50.7 per cent of the votes. However, on 11 December, the major opposition party, the New Patriotic Party, declared its intention to contest the results in court, despite declarations from domestic, regional and international observers commending Ghana for the free and fair conduct of the elections.

6. Despite these positive developments, concerns remain in some countries in the subregion. The polarized political situation in Togo continued to be characterized by a climate of mistrust between the Government and the opposition. In Guinea, legislative elections that were scheduled for October 2012 were delayed due to a disagreement between the Government and opposition parties, mainly over the Independent National Electoral Commission and modalities for the review of the electoral register. In Mauritania, the absence of an electoral timetable for the legislative and municipal elections, coupled with continued calls from a large group of political parties for an inclusive dialogue, fuelled an ongoing climate of political tension. The tensions were further exacerbated by the President's absence from the country, from 14 October to 24 November, for medical treatment in Paris after he was wounded when his convoy was shot at in the outskirts of Nouakchott. In the Gambia, the decision of the Government to execute nine inmates on death row, including two Senegalese nationals, triggered tensions with Senegal that have since subsided.

B. Economic, social and humanitarian trends

7. In spite of an uncertain global economic environment, the economies of most West African countries continued to grow during the reporting period. The most recent estimates of the International Monetary Fund indicate that the subregion will have registered an overall economic growth rate of approximately 5.8 per cent during the second half of 2012, compared to 7.5 per cent in the first six months of 2012. The cases of Mali and Guinea-Bissau, where growth is projected to drop from 2.7 per cent in 2011 to -4.5 per cent in 2012 and from 5.3 per cent to -1.5 per cent respectively, show that sustained economic growth in the subregion remains largely contingent upon political stability.

8. Meanwhile, the humanitarian situation in the Sahel remained precarious and continued to affect the socioeconomic environment in the region. It is estimated that some 18.7 million people across the region continue to experience food insecurity and that over 1 million children are at risk of dying from severe, acute malnutrition. While the initial harvest projections are generally good, a serious locust threat remains. The effects of severe floods on food production in the Gambia, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria and Senegal indicate that many households will continue to be extremely vulnerable in 2013. In Mali, the impact of the situation in the north remains of great concern, as it has resulted in over 200,000 internally displaced persons and some 210,000 Malian refugees in Burkina Faso, Mauritania and Niger.

9. The donor response to the food and nutrition crisis in the Sahel and the displacement stemming from insecurity in northern Mali has been generous and timely. More than $1.3 billion have been raised to date, but a significant disparity in funding allocation persists across countries and sectors. Consequently, additional funding is still needed to ensure a targeted and comprehensive response and to consolidate the fragile gains made in the Sahel region.

10. In the Mano River Basin, the humanitarian situation remains fragile. In Côte d'Ivoire, the number of internally displaced persons has reportedly decreased with the return of those temporarily displaced following the surge of attacks against civilians in the west of the country in June 2012. In addition, as a result of the destruction of the Nahibly camp of internally displaced persons in an attack on 20 July in western Côte d'Ivoire, all remaining internally displaced persons now reside in host communities. Meanwhile, the number of refugees amounts to approximately 84,000, 77 per cent of whom are in Liberia and 11.5 per cent in Ghana. The likelihood of their return to Côte d'Ivoire is minimal, owing to fear of recrimination, retaliation and lack of access to basic social services.

11. In July and August, Sierra Leone and Guinea experienced the worst outbreak of cholera in years, which the national Governments have tried to address. The outbreak reached Guinea-Bissau, where the situation was of particular concern due to a shortage of medicine and the limited amount of information available on the severity and number of affected people, a situation resulting from the political instability. The epidemic seems to have reached its peak in early December.

C. Security trends, including maritime security, drug trafficking and organized crime

12. The threats of transnational organized crime and terrorism continued to undermine governance and security in West Africa. In Mali, criminal and terrorist groups, including Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb and affiliated groups, continued to consolidate their foothold in the north. In northern Nigeria, the protracted perpetration of violence by the militant group Boko Haram continued to be a source of concern for the security and stability of neighbouring countries, as well as for Nigeria. In early December, over 1,000 Nigerian refugees fled to Niger following an attack on 30 November allegedly carried out by Boko Haram. In response, the army of Niger has deployed reinforcements along its border with Nigeria, as a means of stopping the militants' activities from spilling over into its national territory.

13. West Africa has increasingly become a transit region for the trafficking of South American cocaine en route to Europe. Since July 2012, several cocaine

shipments have allegedly been made by air, although no country in West Africa has made major seizures. The Nigerian authorities seized a total of 53.7 kg of heroin at the international airport of Lagos. During the reporting period, the level of local consumption of cocaine, crack cocaine and heroin in the West African subregion continued to increase. The countries of the subregion lack the resources and capacity necessary to address this phenomenon effectively. The proliferation of fake or counterfeit medicine in several countries, including Benin, Burkina Faso, Nigeria and Togo, also continued to cause concern. More than 146 tons of different types of a medicine classified as an opiate were seized in 2012 at the ports of Lomé (Togo) and Cotonou (Benin). Furthermore, Benin, Ghana, Mali, Nigeria and Togo reported seizures for a total of 41.8 kg of methamphetamine at their airports since July.

14. Meanwhile, piracy in the Gulf of Guinea has continued to threaten the security and economic activities of coastal States. Between 1 July and 7 December 2012, 22 attempted or committed acts of piracy and armed robbery at sea in West African waters were reported by the International Maritime Organization, compared to 35 in the first half of 2012 and 74 in 2011. These figures only provide a partial picture of the actual incidence of piracy in the subregion, as it is estimated that many attacks go unreported.

15. Porous borders remained a source of concern, as they contribute to instability in the subregion. Despite joint military deployments by the Governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia, with the support of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) and the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI), there were no significant improvements in the security situation along the common border area of the two countries. Meanwhile, growing insecurity in the border area between Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana is also a matter of concern.

D. Trends relating to human rights and gender issues

16. The human rights situation has been affected by political instability and insecurity, as well as by the growing threat of terrorism and election-related tensions in the region.

17. In Mali, where radical Islamist groups are in control of the north, civil and political rights have been severely restricted. Cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment such as mutilation and stoning have been carried out. Cases of sexual violence, forced recruitment and extrajudicial killings have also been reported. Women and children have been the primary victims of the crisis and have been disproportionately affected by the situation in the north. Extreme poverty and a lack of employment and education have created conditions conducive to the recruitment of young people by armed extremist Islamic groups.

18. The Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights, Ivan Šimonović, visited Mali from 4 to 8 October. There, he found that the human rights situation had continued to deteriorate since January 2012, especially in the north, with serious abuses, including alleged war crimes, being committed. The Assistant Secretary-General observed that the character and prevalence of human rights abuses had changed since the start of the crisis, with grave, yet more sporadic violations. Since the occupation of the north by Ansar Dine, the Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa and Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb, different types of abuses are being witnessed, including executions, floggings, amputations and stoning, among

other cr el and inhumane punishments. There is some concern about targeted extrajudicial killings and reprisal attacks against certain ethnic groups in southern Mali. The status of approximately 30 detainees and the alleged disappearance of some 20 soldiers in connection with the counter-coup attempted on 30 April, including the lack of progress in investigating human rights violations committed during the coup and the attempted counter-coup, remained a matter of concern.

19. The signing of an agreement between Senegal and the African Union on 22 August establishing African extraordinary chambers within Senegalese jurisdiction to try international crimes committed in Chadian territory between 7 June 1982 and 1 December 1990 constituted a modest step forward in efforts to combat impunity. Meanwhile, in Guinea, with regard to the recommendations contained in the report of the international Commission of Inquiry mandated to establish the facts and circumstances of the events of 28 September 2009 in Guinea (S/2009/693, annex), Colonel Abdoulaye Cherif Diaby was charged on 13 September for his alleged responsibilities in those events. Furthermore, in the context of social tensions affecting host communities in mining areas, the Guinean authorities announced that an investigation would be initiated into the violence that had occurred in the mining town of Zoghota on 8 August 2012, during clashes between security forces and miners. In late November, an investigating judge opened proceedings in the case.

III. Activities of the United Nations Office for West Africa

A. United Nations good offices and activities in the areas of peace consolidation and conflict and crisis prevention

20. During the reporting period, UNOWA focused its good offices and activities on ensuring a return to civilian rule, constitutional order and territorial integrity in Mali, and on managing election-related tensions and assisting in the consolidation of democratic processes and institutions, particularly in Guinea and Togo.

Guinea

21. Against a background of continued political tensions, the Government of Guinea and the opposition engaged in discussions regarding electoral reform and preparations for the legislative elections. The most contentious issues that remained were the reconfiguration of the Independent National Electoral Commission, including calls for the replacement of the Commission's chairman and the selection of the technical operator contracted by the Government to update the voter list, herein referred to as the electoral operator.

22. In this context, on 11 August, following consultations with political parties and civil society organizations, the National Transitional Council, the Economic and Social Council, and the National Council of Communication submitted to the President three options for the reconfiguration of the Independent National Electoral Commission.

23. My Special Representative actively engaged with both President Alpha Condé and representatives of the opposition, encouraging them to continue the political dialogue and to overcome the remaining challenges in order to complete

preparations for the holding of legislative elections in early 2013. During his visit to Guinea, on 22 August, my Special Representative held meetings with President Alpha Condé and the President of the National Transitional Council, Hadja Rabiatou Syrah Diallo, and encouraged the President to create conditions conducive to a credible poll.

24. On 27 and 28 August, security forces reportedly used tear gas against opposition supporters gathered outside the residences of opposition leaders Cellou Dalein Diallo and Lansana Kouyate. In the wake of these incidents, my Special Representative encouraged the President to take initiatives to reduce tensions and build confidence among political stakeholders. He also dispatched an early warning mission to Guinea, from 26 to 31 August, to assess the political and socioeconomic situation and preparations for the legislative elections.

25. On 5 September, the Chairman of the Independent National Electoral Commission, Loucény Camara, announced his intention to step down, given the envisaged reconfiguration of the Commission. In a statement dated 7 September, my Special Representative welcomed the development and encouraged all parties to build on the momentum and engage constructively in discussions on the reconfiguration of the Commission. He also encouraged the Guinean stakeholders, including President Condé and the two main opposition leaders, Cellou Dalein Diallo and Sidya Toure, to reach a compromise on the technical arrangements for the holding of the legislative elections.

26. On 17 September, the National Transitional Council adopted a bill reconfiguring the Commission that provided for equal representation for the presidential coalition and the opposition. The new Commission comprises 25 members: 10 for the ruling party, 10 for the opposition, 3 for civil society organizations and 2 for members appointed by the Minister of Territorial Administration.

27. To ease tensions and at the request of President Condé, the Minister of Territorial Administration reviewed the legal framework for the holding of political gatherings and demonstrations. Subsequently, the Minister announced that public events would no longer be prohibited, provided that all parties involved respected the law. Guinean opposition parties reacted by organizing a demonstration in Conakry on 20 September to demand free, credible and transparent legislative elections. The demonstration, which had been the first to receive appropriate authorization, ended with clashes between supporters of the opposition and security forces.

28. On 29 October, following persistent disagreement within the opposition over the nomination of their 10 commissioners, President Condé appointed 9 of the 10 candidates designated by the opposition groups and 1 from a centrist party. Subsequently, on 1 November, the members of the Commission elected Bakary Fofana as its new chairman, for a seven-year term. While the opposition parties acknowledged the installation of the Commission, they filed an appeal with the Supreme Court against the decree nominating the electoral commissioners and requested the restoration of their tenth commissioner.

29. On 12 December, the President of the Commission announced that elections would be held on 12 May 2013. However, the ruling party and the opposition remain divided over the selection of the electoral operator. The opposition parties have also indicated that their demand for Guineans abroad to be allowed to vote was a non-negotiable prerequisite for the holding of the next legislative elections.

Mali

30. Interim President Dioncounda Traoré's return to Mali on 27 July, after several weeks of medical care in France, provided new impetus to regional and international efforts to enhance inclusiveness and consolidate the transitional institutions. Upon his arrival, he embarked on the establishment of a government of national unity to broaden the base of the transitional framework. It is in that context that on 29 July my Special Representative travelled to Bamako, as part of a joint delegation composed of representatives of the African Union, ECOWAS, the United Nations, the European Union and the International Organization of la Francophonie, to impress upon the Malian stakeholders the need to articulate a coherent road map and assume greater ownership for the resolution of the crisis. My Special Representative also travelled on two occasions to Abidjan in September to consult with President Alassane Ouattara, in his capacity as Chairman of the ECOWAS Authority, and to participate in the ECOWAS Mediation and Security Council meeting of 17 September.

31. Furthermore, as part of efforts to convey the support of the United Nations to the interim Government of Mali, my Special Representative travelled to Bamako on 22 and 23 August. In his meetings with Malian officials, including interim President Traoré, he reiterated the readiness of the United Nations to strengthen the capacity of Government institutions, including the proposed national committee that would be responsible for the national dialogue process.

32. On 30 August, I received a letter from interim President Traoré requesting United Nations assistance in the areas of dialogue and negotiations, humanitarian assistance and the reorganization of the armed forces. A similar request was sent by the interim President to other regional organizations, including ECOWAS. Following this request, I dispatched a preliminary assessment mission to Mali, from 30 September to 5 October, to explore areas that the United Nations could support. The mission underlined the need to establish a political presence in Bamako in order to help articulate the strategic and operational support required by the Malian stakeholders in specific areas.

33. Meanwhile, calls for an African intervention force to assist the Malian Armed Forces regain control of the north continued to gather pace and momentum at the international level. In light of the request of ECOWAS and the African Union for the Security Council to authorize the deployment of an ECOWAS stabilization force, I was mandated by the Council, in paragraph 18 of its resolution 2056 (2012), to support the ECOWAS and African Union commissions to prepare detailed options for the deployment of such a force.

34. In this context, my Special Representative worked closely with ECOWAS, the African Union and the Malian authorities to develop a joint strategic concept for the resolution of the crisis, and to assist the Malian stakeholders regain full control of Mali's territorial integrity and achieve full restoration of the constitutional order, consistent with Security Council resolution 2071 (2012). The strategic concept, which calls for action on political, military, security sector reform, humanitarian and development pillars, was adopted at the Support and Follow-up Group Meeting on Mali held in Bamako on 19 October. The Meeting paved the way for the swift harmonization and finalization of the strategic operational framework that was endorsed by ECOWAS Heads of State and Government at a summit, held in Abuja,

on 11 November, as well as by the Peace and Security Council of the African Union during its 341st meeting, held in Addis Ababa on 13 November.

35. Subsequently, as part of efforts to implement the various pillars of the strategic concept, and in liaison with ECOWAS, my Special Representative travelled to Bamako, Ouagadougou and Abidjan, from 6 to 8 November and from 11 to 14 November to impress upon the Malian authorities the need to fast-track initiatives aimed at creating conditions conducive to a negotiation process with rebel groups in the north of Mali. These negotiations would be governed by the parameters set by the Malian authorities and ECOWAS, which include respect for Mali's territorial integrity and unity, the secular character of the State and rejection of terrorism and organized crime. My Special Representative also held consultations with President Blaise Compaoré of Burkina Faso, in his capacity as ECOWAS Mediator, and President Alassane Ouattara of Côte d'Ivoire, in his capacity as Chairman of ECOWAS, to reiterate the readiness of the United Nations to support ECOWAS mediation efforts to reach a framework agreement between the authorities and rebel groups in the north, while continuing to advance with military preparations for the possible use of force, in particular against terrorist groups and organized crime networks in the north.

36. On 11 December, Prime Minister Cheick Modibo Diarra and his cabinet resigned following his brief arrest by the military. On the same day, interim President Traoré appointed Diango Cissoko, former national mediator, as the new Prime Minister.

37. During the reporting period, UNOWA and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-WOMEN) co-facilitated the training of 40 Malian women on mediation and negotiation techniques in Bamako from 12 to 16 November. On the margins of the training, UNOWA organized, together with UN-Women and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), a high-level national conference of women to promote the full involvement of women in mediation and negotiation processes. The conference, which was held in close cooperation with the Malian Ministry for the Promotion of Women, Children and the Family and in partnership with the Women, Peace and Security Network in West Africa, adopted and submitted to the transitional Government a declaration highlighting the importance of women's participation in the current mediation, dialogue and peacebuilding efforts, in line with Security Council resolution 2056 (2012).

The Gambia

38. The execution of nine inmates on death row, including one woman and two Senegalese nationals, as announced by the Minister of the Interior on 27 August, was condemned by the local opposition, foreign Governments, including Senegal, and human rights organizations. The executions were the first to be carried out in the country since 1985.

39. Against this background, I dispatched my Special Representative to meet with President Jammeh in Banjul on 19 November to discuss issues pertaining to the situation in the Gambia and the subregion. During their meeting, the President indicated that, unless advised otherwise by the people of the Gambia, he would not lift the death penalty moratorium he had imposed following calls from within the country. President Jammeh also reiterated his request to have a United Nations

investigation team dispatched to the country to probe the circumstances of the death of two journalists, Deyda Haydara and Ebrima Manneh. The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights is discussing the matter with the Gambian authorities.

Togo

40. My Special Representative travelled to Togo from 25 to 27 July to discuss the preparations for the national dialogue and elections with the Government and the opposition. During his visit, he emphasized the need for an inclusive dialogue without preconditions and for both sides to exchange messages of goodwill. His visit took place against a background of continued political deadlock between the Government and the opposition, which continued to reject the Government's offer of dialogue, calling upon it to put in place a process that would lead to constitutional and institutional reforms, as well as a political dialogue before the elections. The visit of my Special Representative was informed by an early warning mission to Lomé undertaken by UNOWA from 26 to 30 June, which had concluded that human rights violations had been committed in the context of the civil society demonstrations of June 2012.

41. On 8 October, the Government announced the postponement of the elections. Meanwhile, 15 of the 17 members of the Independent National Electoral Commission were elected by the National Assembly on 15 and 17 October. In a further effort to forge consensus on the organization of the legislative elections, the Government launched a new round of dialogue on 16 November, during which it made proposals to pave the way for further discussions towards a broad political agreement. The opposition coalitions "Let us Save Togo" and "Arc-en-ciel" joined the meeting, but walked out during the proceedings.

Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission

42. The Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission, chaired by my Special Representative, continued to make strides to implement the ruling of the International Court of Justice of 10 October 2002 concerning the land and maritime boundary between Cameroon and Nigeria. As the 10-year deadline for revising the ruling under article 61 of the Statute of the International Court of Justice neared, multiple voices urged the Government of Nigeria to call for a revision of the ruling. On 18 July and 26 September respectively, the House of Representatives and the Senate of Nigeria called on the Nigerian Federal Government to initiate a review of the Court's ruling of 10 October 2002. Following consultations between President Goodluck Jonathan and legal and boundary experts, the Attorney-General of Nigeria announced, on 10 October, the Government's decision not to pursue a revision of the ruling. Civil society organizations protested the decision and called for a suspension of the boundary delineation so that the issues encountered by Nigerian nationals affected by the border demarcation in Bakassi and returnees from Bakassi in Nigeria could be addressed.

43. Regarding the implementation of the Greentree Agreement of 12 June 2006, the fifteenth and sixteenth missions to observe the withdrawal and transfer of authority in the Bakassi Peninsula from Nigeria to Cameroon took place from 2 to 6 July and from 11 to 15 November respectively. The missions noted that a peaceful environment prevailed in the area and that the Government of Cameroon had taken

steps to improve the living conditions of the local population. The follow-up committee tasked with monitoring the implementation of the Greentree Agreement undertook its nineteenth and twentieth missions from 19 to 20 July and from 29 to 30 November respectively, in Geneva, under the chairmanship of my Special Representative and with the participation of the representatives of Cameroon and Nigeria and the four witness States to the Agreement.

44. During the twenty-ninth session of the Mixed Commission, held on 30 and 31 August in Yaoundé, the parties made progress regarding the demarcation and endorsed the outcome of the latest field assessment undertaken by the joint technical team of surveyors. Of the estimated 2,000 km of land boundary, 1,845 km have been agreed by the parties. Surveyors assessed an additional 22 km of the Akwayafe River from 6 to 16 November. The Mixed Commission also adopted the conclusions of the report of the independent expert team appointed to resolve the disagreement related to the identification of Mount Tosso. However, it was agreed to defer implementation of the conclusions, as other areas of disagreement remain to be submitted to the independent experts for resolution. Moreover, the delegation of Nigeria undertook to expedite the process for consideration of the draft framework agreement on cross-border cooperation on hydrocarbons straddling the Cameroon-Nigeria maritime boundary.

45. Regarding confidence-building measures, on 27 July the Government of Cameroon approved four projects prepared by the Mixed Commission jointly with the United Nations country team. The projects aim at enhancing food security, water supply, capacity in vocational training and energy distribution along the Nigeria-Cameroon border. In Nigeria, selected projects are focused on livelihoods, water, education, energy, resettlement and infrastructure. The Mixed Commission, with the support of UNDP, is taking steps to determine the cost of these projects and develop resource mobilization strategies.

B. Enhancing subregional capacities to address cross-border and cross-cutting threats to peace and security, including piracy

Security sector reform

46. During the reporting period, UNOWA continued to support the development of security sector reform capacities and of nationally led security sector reform initiatives in the subregion, in cooperation with key partners, including UNDP, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Peacebuilding Support Office. Considering the current context in West Africa, my Special Representative proposed to the President of the ECOWAS Commission, in a letter dated 6 September, that the United Nations reinitiate its support for the adoption of a subregional political framework and plan of action on security sector governance and reform.

Mali

47. UNOWA participated in the initial efforts to respond to the request for United Nations assistance by the Malian authorities in the area of security sector reform. In this regard, UNOWA engaged with national authorities, both through the United Nations preliminary assessment mission to Mali, held from 1 to 5 October, and the United Nations planning team, which deployed to Mali from 29 October to 6 November, to assist with the development of a strategic operational framework for

a military intervention in the north of Mali. While national efforts in security sector reform have already been made, notably through the establishment of a military committee to monitor the reform of defence and security forces, as agreed in the framework agreement of 6 April the United Nations will need to support a comprehensive reform and ensure coherence between short-term operational security sector reform and the longer-term process of transforming the country institutional security architecture.

Guinea

48. The deployment in May 2012 of the United Nations security sector reform advisory team, headed by a senior security sector reform adviser, at the request of President Alpha Condé was completed in September. The team, which is financed by the Peacebuilding Fund, has been actively assisting the Guinean authorities by providing strategic advice, supporting resource mobilization for the national reform programme and facilitating the coordination of international efforts on security sector reform.

49. Under my Special Representative's continued supervision and in cooperation with the UNDP Resident Coordinator, the senior security sector reform adviser and his team also ensured coherence of the United Nations system's approach to security sector reform in Guinea with the broader programme of State reform, while strengthening the capacity of Guinean institutions.

50. The reorganization of the security sector reform National Steering Committee of Guinea, including its Management Unit and its suborgans, marked an important step forward and allowed for the effective integration of civil society and the civil-military committee in the Technical Monitoring Commission.

51. On 17 October, the Management Unit of the security sector reform National Steering Committee organized, under the auspices of the Prime Minister and with the support of the senior security sector reform adviser, a seminar to re-engage key ministries in the national process and to mainstream activities related to security sector reform into the budgets of relevant ministries, as well as to promote coordination with the Strategic Orientation Commission. On 14 November, President Condé tasked the Strategic Orientation Commission to complete the legal framework and develop sectoral policies.

Drug trafficking and transnational organized crime

52. On 29 June, at a summit in Yamoussoukro, ECOWAS Heads of State agreed to renew the Regional Action Plan to Address the Growing Problem of Illicit Drug Trafficking, Organized Crime and Drug Abuse in West Africa, which had been adopted for the period 2008-2011. Subsequently, UNOWA reiterated its offer to assist ECOWAS, together with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), by holding a meeting of governmental experts to revise and update the Regional Action Plan.

53. As part of the implementation of the outcome of the Regional Conference on Impunity, Justice and Human Rights organized under the aegis of UNOWA and held in Bamako from 2 to 4 December 2011, UNODC held a meeting of 30 regional experts in Senegal from 19 to 21 November on a regional prosecution transfer mechanism for high-profile transnational organized crime cases. As a result, the

participants announced the establishment of a West African network of central authorities and prosecutors to drive regional cooperation.

54. As part of the overall efforts to mobilize international support for the implementation of the ECOWAS Regional Action Plan, my Special Representative met with European Union officials in Brussels on 1 October to discuss the Union's pledge to support the Regional Action Plan and other initiatives, such as the West Africa Coast Initiative. On 30 and 31 October, he held bilateral talks with United States officials, during which it was agreed to enhance complementarities between current United Nations counter-narcotics efforts, the West Africa Coast Initiative and the West Africa Cooperative Security Initiative — a United States-initiated bilateral programme — with the support of the European Union and other partners.

55. At the request of the Kofi Annan Foundation, and as a follow-up to the regional seminar held in Dakar, in May 2012 UNOWA provided support for the establishment of a West Africa commission on drug trafficking, governance, security and development. The commission, which is being set up as a high-level, independent body, will be launched in January 2013 to support the implementation of the ECOWAS Regional Action Plan through advocacy efforts with Governments and civil society in the countries concerned.

56. With regard to the implementation of the West Africa Coast Initiative, UNOWA, UNODC, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) pursued efforts to consolidate gains in certain countries, namely, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia and Sierra Leone. The transnational crime units enhanced their operations in Liberia and Sierra Leone. Plans for the establishment of a transnational crime unit in Guinea were in progress. In the light of persistent funding challenges, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and UNOCI, in coordination with UNODC, were considering options for utilizing existing resources to initiate the establishment of a transnational crime unit in Côte d'Ivoire. They were also implementing other initiatives to enhance host-State police and other law enforcement capacities to fight transnational organized crime. In Guinea-Bissau, UNODC and the United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office in Guinea-Bissau continued to support the establishment of a transnational crime unit and the building up of a team related to such a unit, amid financial constraints due to the freeze in donor funding and the Peacebuilding Fund's contribution. A meeting of the Programme Advisory Committee of the West Africa Coast Initiative was held on 12 December. At the meeting, the Committee recommended the launch of technical exchange visits between West Africa Coast Initiative member States to facilitate the set-up of transnational crime units.

Counter-terrorism

57. UNOWA worked closely with other entities of the United Nations system to strengthen West African capacities and relevant international networks to address the increase in terrorist activities in the subregion. The Office contributed to the initiatives of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, in particular the subregional workshop held in Rabat from 17 to 19 July. The meeting, which was co-organized with the International Centre for Counter-Terrorism, focused on the development of comprehensive national counter-terrorism strategies in nine

countries with links to the Sahel, namely Algeria, Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger, Nigeria and Senegal.

Maritime piracy in the Gulf of Guinea

58. Since my last report, my Special Representative for West Africa, in coordination with my Special Representative for Central Africa, continued to engage with regional and international partners regarding the development of a regional anti-piracy strategy for the Gulf of Guinea, in the context of the implementation of Security Council resolution 2039 (2012). In this connection, the technical working group and the steering committee established by ECOWAS, the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) and the Commission of the Gulf of Guinea met in Libreville on 22 and 23 October to discuss, with the participation of UNOCA and UNOWA, preparations for the organization of a regional summit of the States of the Gulf of Guinea. At the meeting, which was attended by representatives of the Maritime Organization of West and Central Africa and the Department of State of the United States, it was recommended that a summit of Heads of State be held in Cameroon in April 2013 and that it be preceded by a preparatory meeting at the ministerial level, to be held in Benin in March 2013.

C. Promotion of good governance, respect for the rule of law, human rights and the mainstreaming of gender

59. UNOWA continued to support efforts to protect human rights and promote gender mainstreaming. UNOWA facilitated, from 3 to 9 September, a training of trainers for the Senegalese defence forces on gender, peace and security.

60. On 13 September, during an open day on women, peace and security, my Special Representative and the Regional Director of UN-Women co-chaired a meeting on the participation of women in electoral processes and on the ECOWAS Regional Plan of Action for the implementation of Security Council resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008) in West Africa. The meeting was attended by representatives of women's organizations from Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Mauritania, Senegal and Togo.

61. From 24 to 26 September, UNOWA, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and UN-Women jointly organized a conference on the ratification of international human rights instruments. At the conference, which was attended by government and civil society experts from Burkina Faso, Cape Verde and Senegal, participants adopted a strategic plan to advocate for the ratification and implementation of core human rights instruments, and reporting thereon. On 6 October, in the context of the fifty-second session of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, UNOWA organized a panel discussion on the role of civil society in the advancement of governance, peace and security in West Africa. The panel, which was attended by 200 experts, agreed on a statement submitted by non-governmental organizations to the African Commission underlining new areas of focus and approaches, as well as the need to build capacity to respond to emerging threats to peace and stability.

D. Inter-institutional cooperation

United Nations inter-institutional cooperation

62. On 8 October, my Special Representative hosted the twenty-fourth meeting of the heads of peace missions in West Africa in Dakar to review cross-cutting issues and progress in the coordination of United Nations activities in the subregion. While expressing concern at the ongoing challenges in West Africa, including in Guinea-Bissau and Mali, the heads of mission stressed the critical role of cooperation at the local, regional and international levels in addressing the numerous peace and security problems in West Africa.

63. As part of United Nations efforts to implement the recommendations of the inter-agency assessment mission that I had dispatched to the Sahel in December 2011, my Special Representative continued to engage with the Regional Humanitarian Coordinator and the Chair of the regional branch of the United Nations Development Group to develop an integrated approach to the challenges affecting the Sahel. In this context, a regional task force composed of representatives of the United Nations system, developed an action plan on resilience in the Sahel. As requested in Security Council resolution 2056 (2012), UNOWA also facilitated, through the task force, consultations for the preparation of an integrated strategy for the Sahel, encompassing security, governance, development, human rights and humanitarian issues.

64. My Special Representative chaired, on 26 November, the eleventh meeting of the Dakar-based regional directors and representatives of United Nations agencies. Participants reviewed the situation in Mali, drug trafficking, elections and security in the subregion. Subsequently, my Special Representative held meetings with the Dakar-based ambassadors of States Members of the Security Council, where he briefed them on progress made by UNOWA in the implementation of its mandate and on the situation in the subregion.

Cooperation with regional and subregional partners

65. During the reporting period, UNOWA continued to assist ECOWAS in the implementation of the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework. From 30 October to 1 November, UNOWA and the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue supported a needs assessment workshop for the ECOWAS Mediation and Facilitation Division that had been held in Lagos. The meeting contributed to ongoing efforts to establish the ECOWAS Mediation and Facilitation Division, which is a key pillar of the conflict prevention component of the ECOWAS Framework.

66. My Special Representative continued to support the work of the Mano River Union through the joint Strategic Framework of Cooperation for Peace and Security. Responding to a request from the Secretary-General of the Union for UNOWA assistance in strengthening the capacity of the Secretariat, UNOWA will support the costing of the operational plan for peace and security adopted by heads of State at the summit of the Union held in Conakry on 15 June.

67. On 12 September, UNOWA participated in a meeting of national electoral commissions of States members of the Mano River Union that focused on the development of a subregional strategy on democratic elections. Participants adopted a number of technical and strategic recommendations, including on issues related to

ensuring the independence of electoral commissions through legal reforms, the funding of elections and the protection of minorities.

68. UNOWA also participated in a regional seminar held from 16 to 18 October and organized by the Commission of the West African Economic and Monetary Union together with the Government of Senegal that explored ways of establishing a mechanism on peace and security within the Commission.

69. As part of its efforts to enhance subregional capacities for conflict prevention and mediation, UNOWA organized a regional consultative meeting, held in Dakar on 10 and 11 December, bringing together representatives of ECOWAS, the Mano River Union and the African Union, as well as practitioners from the United Nations system and other organizations such as the European Union and the International organisation of la Francophonie. Participants in the meeting reviewed the most recent political and security trends, and focused on identifying ways to better anticipate and respond to peace and security challenges in the subregion.

Development of a subregional security strategy

70. In its resolutions 2000 (2011) and 2066 (2012) the Security Council encouraged ECOWAS and the Mano River Union to develop a subregional strategy to address the threat of cross-border movements of armed groups and weapons, as well as trafficking, with the support of UNOWA and appropriate assistance from UNOCI and UNMIL. Following a series of consultations under the leadership of my Special Representative, UNOWA has been pursuing a three-pronged approach that will build on existing arrangements while feeding into the eventual development of the subregional strategy. On the first track, UNOWA will work with the United Nations system to identify concrete ways to assist the Mano River Union in addressing cross-border threats and pursue confidence-building measures. On the second track, there are existing cooperation arrangements between UNMIL and UNOCI on cross-border issues that support efforts of the Mano River Union to assist the Governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia in the development of a shared border strategy. Finally, on the third track, UNOWA works closely with ECOWAS to ensure its continued engagement in addressing such threats in the subregion.

IV. Observations and recommendations

71. Cross-cutting and cross-border challenges continue to represent a threat to regional stability in West Africa and could reverse gains achieved over the past few years. The situation in West Africa continues to be dominated by the crisis in Mali; other countries, including Guinea-Bissau, continue to face persistent instability. The commitment of the ECOWAS leadership to implement regional instruments to address these threats is commendable. For its part, UNOWA will continue to work closely with its partners, including in the United Nations system, to support subregional initiatives aimed at countering threats to peace and security in the region. This will include efforts highlighted in paragraph 70 above.

72. I commend the active engagement of ECOWAS in support of the successful elections in Ghana and Sierra Leone. I welcome the constructive role played by national stakeholders in these countries to ensure the peaceful conduct of elections. The United Nations system stands ready to provide assistance to countries in the subregion where elections are anticipated in 2013.

73. The Malian crisis risks destabilizing the subregion if concerted action is not urgently taken by all stakeholders. I am troubled by the circumstances leading to the resignation of the Prime Minister of Mali, Cheick Modibo Diarra. I call again for an end to military interference in politics and urge Mali's leadership to resolve all issues through peaceful means. I remain concerned by delays in the launching of the national dialogue process. It is imperative that the dialogue be conducted in an inclusive and consensual manner, in line with the relevant Security Council resolutions. I urge all actors to pursue dialogue without further delay in order to reinforce the political transition, which should entail the holding of elections on the basis of a realistic timeline. In this regard, I welcome the commitments made by President Dioncounda Traoré and Diango Cissoko, the new Prime Minister, to pursue a national dialogue and the holding of elections. I encourage them to work together towards the realization of these key transitional tasks.

74. I welcome the initial contacts between the Government of Mali, Ansar Dine and the Movement national pour la libération de l'Azawad, which were facilitated by the ECOWAS Mediator, and the declaration issued by the Mediator on 4 December following the preliminary discussions held in Ouagadougou. I encourage the parties to work towards a framework agreement that includes the cessation of hostilities, gradual restoration of State authority, elections, security arrangements, as well as the key principles and an agenda for future negotiations. My Special Representative will continue to work closely with the ECOWAS Mediator and Malian stakeholders, to support and assist, as appropriate, the negotiation process.

75. I remain concerned by the humanitarian situation in Mali. Despite the promising prospects for the 2012/2013 harvest, many vulnerable households will need further assistance. It is imperative that humanitarian and development interventions continue to play a crucial and complementary role in supporting households to build resilience, while ensuring that early warning and risk reduction activities mitigate the effects of climate change. In this context, I encourage donor partners to continue supporting humanitarian and development activities to address all acute needs.

76. I commend the Government of Guinea and the country's opposition for their commitment to a dialogue aimed at consolidating peace and stability. The timely holding of free, fair and peaceful legislative elections represents an essential step in concluding the transition process and consolidating democracy. I welcome the reconfiguration of Guinea's electoral body as an important step towards the holding of elections and I encourage all political actors to support it. I take note of the announcement made by the president of the Independent National Election Commission, regarding the date of the elections, and call on all political actors to work together to avoid further delays. I appeal to the ruling party and the opposition to ensure that outstanding electoral issues are addressed in a spirit of goodwill and compromise.

77. I encourage all stakeholders to commit to advancing the national reconciliation process initiated by the Government of Guinea. I also urge the Government of Guinea to accelerate the follow-up to the recommendations contained in the Report of the International Commission of Inquiry mandated to establish the facts and circumstances of the events of 28 September 2009 in Conakry.

78. The security sector reform process in Guinea remains critical for the country's stability. The extension of the United Nations security sector reform team will

enable the Organization to continue to provide strategic advice as requested by the country and improve the coordination of international efforts.

79. I am concerned about the execution of nine inmates on death row in the Gambia. I encourage President Yahya Jammeh to establish an official moratorium on the death penalty. The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, through its regional presence, stands ready to provide advice and assistance to the Gambia.

80. Transnational organized crime and drug trafficking continue to fuel regional instability. I welcome the decision by ECOWAS member States to extend the Regional Action Plan on organized crime and illicit drug trafficking. I welcome the ECOWAS decision to revise and renew the plan, and encourage the organization to establish a secretariat on drugs and crime control within its Commission. The upcoming donors' conference will be crucial to ensure that the ECOWAS Regional Action Plan and its implementation tools are well resourced.

81. As illustrated by the situations in Guinea-Bissau and Mali, security sector reform is central to the consolidation of State institutions. I commend Guinea's leadership for the progress made to reform the country's security institutions, and I reaffirm the readiness of the United Nations, through UNOWA, to provide the necessary support. I encourage ECOWAS to finalize and adopt the subregional political framework and plan of action on security sector governance and reform.

82. The commitment of the subregion to confront maritime piracy is encouraging. I welcome the joint efforts of ECCAS, ECOWAS and the Gulf of Guinea Commission, through the technical working group and the Steering Committee, to develop a regional anti-piracy strategy. I welcome the initiative of the Gulf of Guinea countries to organize a ministerial meeting to pave the way for the development of this strategy, with United Nations support as mandated by Security Council resolution 2039 (2012), which should be endorsed by the heads of State of the countries of the subregion at a regional summit.

83. I am encouraged by the increased cooperation between ECOWAS and the international community in the prevention of and response to the mounting threat of terrorism in the subregion. In the context of United Nations counter-terrorism endeavours, I call on the international community to fully support the efforts of West African countries to strengthen their national capacities.

84. I commend the commitment of the Governments of Cameroon and Nigeria to honour the obligations contained in the ruling of the International Court of Justice, and congratulate the Mixed Commission for its smooth implementation of the ruling. The successful achievements thus far are an embodiment of a novel approach to conflict resolution. By peacefully resolving their border and territorial disputes, Cameroon and Nigeria have provided a positive example for countries facing similar challenges. I encourage the parties to reach an agreement soon on the remaining areas of the land boundary so that the demarcation process can be concluded. I reiterate the commitment of the United Nations to continue its support for the full implementation of the ruling of the International Court of Justice. Meanwhile, I encourage both Cameroon and Nigeria to increase efforts to enhance cross-border confidence-building measures that address the socioeconomic, humanitarian and security needs of the affected populations.

85. In conclusion, I wish to express my appreciation to the Governments of West African countries, ECOWAS, the African Union and the Mano River Union for their

continued cooperation. I also extend my appreciation to civil society organizations and other partners for their continued collaboration with UNOWA in the implementation of its mandate. I would like to express my appreciation to my Special Representative, the staff of UNOWA and the Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission for their efforts to advance peace and security in West Africa.